



# News Release

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**Release 2003-58**

**STATE EXTENDS MORATORIUM FOR FIVE YEARS**  
**ON BOISE FRONT GEOTHERMAL SYSTEM**

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IDWR Director Karl J. Dreher has ordered a five-year extension in the moratorium that bans new development or additional use of the Boise Front geothermal aquifer, the Idaho Department of Water Resources announced today.

Dreher took the action to continue to safeguard geothermal aquifer water levels and water pressure levels. Sharp declines of up to 25 feet in water levels in the late 1980s prompted the decision in 1988 by IDWR to put the moratorium in place. The moratorium was extended for five years by IDWR in 1993 and again in 1998.

IDWR scientists monitoring the aquifer say water and pressure level declines appear to have stabilized. Monitoring wells now are showing indications that water levels in the low temperature geothermal aquifer may actually be increasing. Scientists say an injection well, through which the City of Boise injects used geothermal water back into the aquifer, may be partly behind the improving water levels in the aquifer.

Six geothermal water user groups, including the City of Boise, the Idaho Department of Lands and the Warm Springs Water District, were surveyed by IDWR and supported the moratorium extension.

The moratorium covers an area of approximately 125 square miles running along the Boise Front from just west of Lucky Peak to about Eagle Road in western Ada County. Geothermal water, ranging from 85 to 175 degrees Fahrenheit, is found at depths ranging from 400 feet to 3,000 feet.

The order extending the moratorium can be viewed on the IDWR web site – [www.idwr.state.id.us](http://www.idwr.state.id.us) – under the News & Events category.